]: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
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342 573 are simply constructed, the roots of grasses, or occasionally stems of millet, being tightly packed in a narrow trench to make windscreens, and the tops of the grasses being bound together and plastered with dung on the outside to make huts (Plates XV (*a*), XIX (*a*), and XXI (*b*)). The whole space within a windscreen is occupied by a hearth of ashes on which the men sleep around a fire, and the openings face the kraal. If people do not intend to spend more than a few days at a site they often sleep in the open and do not trouble to erect windscreens and huts. These light dwellings can be erected in a few hours.

IV

221 136 231 Another circumstance that determines Nuer movements is the abundance of insect life, which is an ever-present menace, for the cattle get little rest from stinging flies and ticks from morn till nightfall and would be worried to death if their masters did not give them some protection.

136 231 372 Mosquitoes swarm in the rains, their ravages being terrible from July to September, when, as soon as the sun sets, men and beasts have to take refuge in huts and byres. The doors of the huts are tightly closed, the air-holes blocked, and fires lit. In the centre of the byres, which house the cattle, burn large dung fires which fill them with smoke so dense that one cannot even see the cattle. Young men sleep on platforms above the fires, and if the smoke clears—the doors are shut, but it escapes through the thatched roof—they descend to pile on more fuel. By this means the beasts are enabled to obtain some rest at night. At the end of the rains while the cattle are still in the villages they are left in the kraals till their masters go to bed, when they are shut in the byres to protect them from lions. Fires are not made up so high at this season, for mosquitoes are less troublesome, since there is no surface water, the millet has been cut, and the grasses are close-cropped. Later those men who remain in the villages, while the others go into camps, often erect windscreens in the kraals and spend the night outside with any cows which have been left behind. In the dry season mosquitoes are absent except near pools and marshes, and even in the vicinity of water they are not troublesome from January to May, so that the herds can sleep in the open. Nevertheless,

1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
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they are surrounded by windscreens in which their masters sleep at the side of dung fires from which smoke rises on every side to envelop the camp.

Another unpleasant pest is the seroot fly. It appears to be seasonal, flourishing on cloudy days from May to July, though it sometimes appears at other times of the year. The seroot attack the cattle in the mornings and accompany them to pastures, where they bite them so effectively that they are often driven, stained with blood, back to camp, where dung fires are lit to give them protection. On such days the cattle are unable to graze, fitfully, for more than two or three hours. Another biting fly, the *stomoxys*, is prevalent throughout the year, being especially conspicuous in the dry season and early rains. It is probably this fly which is responsible for the presence of trypanosomiasis in parts of Nuerland, especially among the Eastern Jikany, by transmitting the trypanosomes directly on its proboscis from beast to beast, for the tsetse does not occur in Nuerland, except, perhaps, on its eastern extremities, though its lethal character is well known to Nuer. There are other insects which annoy the cattle, but it is not known whether any of them carry disease in this latitude. Of these may be mentioned the eight-legged cattle tick, which Nuer remove from the bodies of their animals when they return to camp in the evenings—though not frequently or systematically enough; an insect called *thirkwac* which is said to live on the bodies of cattle, though its bites do not cause bleeding; a fly called *mich*; and the common black fly, like our house fly in appearance, which worries the herds a good deal in hot weather—damp and cold seem to kill it off. Red soldier ants occasionally infest the byres so that the cattle have to be removed while the floors are sprinkled with ashes, but they are rare in Nuerland. Nuer are helpless against most of these insects, though, no doubt, smoke keeps them away to some extent.

Speaking from personal experience I may say that one is continuously tormented by insects in Nuerland, especially by the common black fly and the mosquito. It is evident that the cattle suffer considerably from their attentions and there can be little doubt that this constant irritation lowers their vitality and affects their milk yield, for they seldom have any real rest. In the circumstances their hardiness and endurance are remarkable.

Since several species of tsetse in the Southern Sudan carry trypanosomes pathogenic to cattle it is fortunate for the Nuer that they do not occur in his country. This immunity is

1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
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135 Nuerland lacks the two raw materials that have played so important a part in the manufacture of primitive tools: iron and stone. Nuer have always been poor in iron objects. Till recently 411 they possessed very few iron spears, cherished as heirlooms, but used instead the straightened horns of antelope and buck, ebony wood, and the rib-bones of giraffe, all of which are still used to-day, 442 though almost entirely in dances (Fig. 11). Wooden hoes were used for gardening, and are still sometimes so used to-day. Iron 301 bells (Fig. 4) are rare and highly prized even at the present time, and in the old days iron rings and bracelets were important pieces of property. Wooden bells and ivory and leather rings and bracelets took their place in common use. Nuer have no knowledge of 325 smelting and little of the blacksmith's art. I have never seen a forge and, though there are certainly some blacksmiths, their art is crude and may be regarded as a recent innovation, at any rate in most parts of Nuerland. Spears bought from Arab merchants are beaten out in the cold.

135 Nuerland also lacks any kind of hard stone. Indeed, outside villages I have never seen a stone. They are sometimes brought 442 from neighbouring areas and employed as hammers, for smoothing 323 metal ornaments, for rubbing skins, and so on. Grinding grain seems to have been a recent introduction. The grinder is made from thornwood and the grindstone from baked marsh mud mixed with finely pounded potsherds (Fig. 12). With clay, mud, and sand, Nuer also make pots, grain-bins, pipes, toys, hearthstones, and firescreens; construct the walls of byres and huts; and coat floors and those parts of homesteads they wish to keep smooth and clean.

137 Nature, which denies them iron and stone, is niggardly in her gift of wood. Large trees are rare. Thornwood and low brush- 322 wood provide timber for building, spear-shafts, harpoon-shafts, clubs (Frontispiece and Plate VIII), pestles, neck-rests, baskets, and winnowing trays. Probably no trees in Nuerland are suitable for carving and Nuer possess no wooden utensils. Even the ebony they use for making spears is not found in their country. Ambatch-trees grow in some parts of the swamp areas and from it is made an object which serves as a parrying stick, tobacco pouch, pillow, and seat (Plate XXIX). Byre and kraal fires are fed with [372] dried dung, and wood fuel is only employed in the kitchen—grasses and millet stalks sometimes being used as a substitute. Grasses, millet stalks, and some plants are also used for various purposes: rafters, windscreens, thatching, cord, basketwork, &c. Gourds are cultivated for dairy utensils.

237 Lacking iron and stone Nuer thus make use of vegetable and earthy materials instead. Animal products are also a valuable

6: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936)1938
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233 136 [234] 233 136 372 237 [232] 136

morn till nightfall and in the rainy season they are menaced by mosquitos as soon as the sun sets.

When the rains commence the cattle are taken back to the permanent villages and, as mosquitos become numerous, they are milked towards sunset and then at once tethered in the byres, the doors being closed after them. In the centre of each byre a huge fire of dried dung sends out clouds of smoke so dense that it is impossible for a European to remain there for several minutes. One cannot even see the cattle. One can only hear their movements as they chew the cud (*nyök*) and change their position. The smoke and heat are so oppressive that I have often wondered how either Nuer or their cattle survive the atmosphere night after night. Young men sleep on a platform above the fire and if the smoke becomes less dense one of them descends to stir up the fire and pile on more dung, for as soon as the smoke beings to clear—it escapes through the thatched roof—mosquitos enter. When the cattle are brought into the kraal before sunrise they are sleepy. I suppose that they have not had a very restful night in the stifling atmosphere of the byres. Nuer realize that the heat and smoke of the byres are bad for the cattle but they consider that mosquitos are worse. At the end of the rainy season and at the commencement of the dry season they leave the cattle outside till they go to bed themselves. Then they have to shut them in the byres because they would inevitably be devoured by lions if left all night unguarded in the kraals. They do not make up the fires so high at this time of the year for after the first millet harvest has been reaped mosquitos are far less numerous near the villages, since there is now no standing water and the grasses have been close-cropped on the ridges by the flocks and herds. Later those who still remain in the villages often erect windscreens in the kraals and spend the night with the cattle outside.

136

The worst months for mosquitos are July, August and September, when there is surface water and when the millet crop is well grown, for swarms of mosquitos shelter beneath the broad leaves of the millet during the heat of the day. As soon as the sun sets one hears Nuer slapping mosquitoes on their bodies as they sit by the kraal

6: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936)1938
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512 About noon youths and maidens bathe in the river wherever a
226 shallow sandy stretch offers a clear playground. They do the same
883 at inland lakes but much time is there given also to fishing. The young people sit and splash in the water and the sexes flirt and wrestle in and out of the water. At about 2.30 they return to the camp where the girls churn the morning milk and pound and grind millet for the evening meal. The men turn over the drying dung with their sticks and then, having nothing more they need attend to, most of them return to their windscreens though one or two youths may try and spear fish in the shallows and they are joined there by older boys who are not herding the calves.

512 About 4-30 p.m. the small calves are brought from the shade
233 where they have spent the day and are tethered in the kraal. The
237 men hold them between their legs and lifting up their heads compel
372 them to swallow water. At this time the boys bring back the larger calves and goats and sheep from grazing. Members of each household tether their animals. Generally one or two men now go out to meet (*luor*) the returning herd. Others gather the dried dung on hides from the heaps into which boys have swept it, and each owner of a windscreen makes up the evening fire on his hearth. There is no need to light the fires as they have been smouldering all day long and it is only necessary to clear away surface ashes and heap the new fuel on the exposed embers. Dense clouds of smoke arise and envelope the camp.

512 By 5 o'clock cows which have recently calved come running
233 home and herald the approach of the herd which appears from 15 to
462 30 minutes later. Adult men tether the cattle of their household
264 and women and boys commence at once to milk the cows and they finish this work before sunset. The women then prepare the evening meal and finish their dairy work. The men sit in their windscreens and await the meal which is served between 7 and 8 p.m. Nuer eat twice a day: in the morning and in the evening. The evening meal consists of millet porridge, with cheese or butter, or both, poured over it. The morning meal is generally the remains of supper heated up or with hot milk poured over it.

14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
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Every one helps in the work of the harvest, for the stalks must be cut down and the heads cut off and placed upon a rack which has been placed in the yard for that purpose. The grains of dura are pounded out, then it becomes the property of the housewife after the seed dura has been selected and stored for the coming year.

The stalks of dura are often kept for fuel or for making fences.

If the rainy season has started early there may be a second crop of dura, but this seldom happens.

The wife must pound the dura and sift it to get the bran out. She pounds it in a hole in the ground which she has plastered with mud, using a long pole. She usually chants a song as she pounds, the thud of the pounding serving as a low accompaniment to her song.

The dura is cooked like mush and forms the main part of the food of a Nuer. He eats it without salt or sugar; sometimes he has a little milk on it. Or the dura may be soaked and then allowed to sour a little, and then cooked, in order to give the family a little variety in their meals.

Corn is also eaten, usually being parched. They also chew the dura stalk or the sugar-cane stalk (if they have it) for the sugar they find in them.

Some wild tubers are eaten, and some kinds of wild greens. Beans are also eaten, but I know of no Nuer who plants them in his own village. Men consider these wild greens effeminate and will not eat them except in times of famine. Sometimes in times of famine they gather certain wild grass seeds and cook them as a food.

The Nuer is not inclined to plant any large field and thus be assured of a surplus of food. The Arab merchant comes to his village when the dura is threshed and shows such an array of beads and cloths that the Nuer is tempted